

Russian archive sources of the late 19th - Early 20th centuries on muslims of volga and central Asia

Zaynullin G.

Kazan Federal University, 420008, Kremlevskaya 18, Kazan, Russia

Abstract

© Serials Publications. The relevance of the problem at issue can be explained by the growing academic interest to studies of the image of Muslim peoples of Russia and the countries of the former USSR in the contemporary non-Muslim sources. The goal of this paper is to define the importance of several such sources for the present-day historical and ethnographic research and their introduction into the academic discourse. The primary approach to studying this problem is the method of description and comparison of the sources, as well as their linguistic, structural and stylistic analysis. We have studied several works, among them a historical and ethnographical study by physician A. Spasskiy, "Facts about Mishars. Ethnographic Study" by Orthodox arch-priest Y.A. Malov and "Report of Turkestan Teachers Seminary" by N.P. Ostroumov, and we came to a number of conclusions about the importance of these sources for Islamic Studies, as well as a conclusion that the most objective and valuable of these sources are Spasskiy's and Ostroumov's works. The sources in question are works of missionary orientalist of the late 19th - early 20th centuries, and they can play an important role in expanding the academic knowledge on the history, culture, traditions, customs, languages and lifestyles of Muslims (particularly Tatars of Volga) of Russia of that period, despite their subjectivity, their hostility towards Islam and their being largely focused on missionary goals and promotion of Orthodox Christianity.

Keywords

Central Asia Muslims, Ethnography, Missionary orientalism, Russian sources, Volga Muslims